RØBERTSØN:WEB
Digital Dreamers

Website Terminology Definitions – A Beginner's Guide!

When someone starts talking website terminology, do you go blank? It's okay! No-one is born knowing what JavaScript is. But with the help of our beginner's guide, you'll have website terminology definitions sorted – we promise!

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DOMAIN
1.

A domain, or domain name, is your website address, or more simply, the name of your website (for example: MyBizName.com). Just like your physical address, it's an address on the internet that specifies where a potential client should go to look for information.

Some people confuse their domain with their website. Think of the domain as your home address. It's an easy way for people to find your house. Then think of your website as the house itself, contents and all. The domain is just a simple way for people to be able to find you.

When you register a domain name on the internet (and pay the registration fees), you are buying the right to use that domain name for a year (or whatever term is specified).

URL
2.

A URL (Universal Resource Locator) is different from a domain in that it contains the 'hypertext transfer protocol' (HTTP) as well. Think of it as a complete web address that is used to find a particular web page.

For example, https://www.robertsonweb.com.au/ is the URL for our Home page. https://www.robertsonweb.com.au/packages/ is the URL for our Packages page.

You might also find HTTPS as a prefix to some web URLs, instead of HTTP. This just means that you have a secure connection to the server and no other computers can listen in on the conversation! Look out for this when entering personal details on any website, it is designated by a green 'lock' symbol in the address bar of your browser.

SERVER
3.

Put simply, your web server is a big computer that exists just to host and run websites. The more powerful the computer, the more powerful the server. The server exists to fulfil requests from clients – it stores, processes and delivers web pages to users. When you type in a URL, your browser requests a webpage from the server. So it's like your browser is making a phone call, through the line which is HTTP, to reach the web server of that website. The server relays the information back to your browser which displays the information in HTML and CSS.

HOSTING PROVIDER
4.

Understanding the role of your hosting provider is a hugely important part of running your own website. A hosting provider provides space on their server to host your website so that other computers can access it live. Generally, hosting providers charge a fee for the service which is charged either monthly or annually – plans differ in the level of support they provide, security features, speed etc. Plans can range from limited and low-cost to high-level business plans. As a general rule, you get what you pay for with hosting plans.

FRONT-END
5.

The front-end is what appears in your browser when surfing the web. It refers to the part of the web that your users interact with. A front-end developer is someone that uses the programming languages of HTML and CSS, possibly with the addition of languages like JavaScript, to create what you see in your browser. A front-end developer will use these languages to write code that the browser will translate in order to show you a website. So in short, all the features that you see, including fonts, colours, menus, images and forms are all specified by the languages of HTML and CSS. (see HTML & CSS)

BACK-END
6.

The back-end relates to how the site works, updates and changes. It's basically everything the user can't see from the front-end. Back-end development is essential for any dynamic site that includes features that need to change often and update regularly, e.g. blogs, news sites and aggregate websites. The back-end consists of databases and servers – all things concerned with security, structure and the manner in which content is organised. A database is required to store all information, such as user profiles, images, posts and text, and keep them categorised in a way that makes sense for the site. Back-end developers work with programming languages like PHP, Java, Python and Ruby.

Websites with blogs are considered dynamic sites since their content is constantly changing and updating. A dynamic site requires a database to work properly. All information such as user profiles, images uploaded, or blog posts, are stored in a website's database. Web developers work with programming languages like PHP or .Net, which are different from front-end languages since they need to work with something the database understands. The code they write communicates with the server and then tells the browser what to use from the database.

HTML
7.

HTML stands for Hyper Text Markup Language. It's an essential language for developers to use in order to specify content for a web page. It consists of tags and attributes that tell the browser what content the web page contains. Having basic knowledge of HTML is extremely handy if you have anything to do with entering content into a site. Things like images and text are all specified with HTML.

For example, H tags like <H1></H1> are HTML elements used to define headings in the text on a web page.

JAVASCRIPT
8.

JavaScript is a programming language that can create dynamic and more complex features on web pages. Its features are used to enhance web pages and make them more engaging and can include things like interactive maps, animated graphics and live content updates.

For example, you may have noticed some businesses have their Instagram feed displayed on their website. JavaScript is used to keep this constantly updated whenever the business posts something new on Insta.

SEO
9.

SEO stands for Search Engine Optimisation. The internet has around 1.7 billion websites – so how can you be sure the right customers find yours? SEO is the answer! In simple terms, SEO is the strategy that helps your website be found through search engines like Google, Yahoo, Bing, etc. Google is the main search engine to target, being the world's most popular search engine by far. A range of procedures can be executed to make sure you are following best SEO practices. Whilst site ranking factors are solely up to Google, who can – and do! - change their algorithm at any time, it is important to follow basic optimisation exercises when building and updating your website. This gives your website a much better chance of being found by a potential customer when they conduct a Google search. SEO generally refers to the entire practice of on and off-site actions that will lead to a higher or more targeted ranking on a Google web page.

CSS
10.

Think of HTML as the skeleton/backbone and CSS as the looks. CSS, which stands for Cascading Style Sheets, is the most common way of setting a look and feel of a website. While HTML tells the browser what goes on the page, CSS will tell the browser how it should be presented, for example: colours, fonts, layout and more.

DEVELOPER
11.

A web developer works to write in a variety of programming languages of different functions in order to create digital products. A web developer will either write code in programming languages designed for the purpose of the front-end or back-end of a website (see Front-End & Back-End).

A web developer who has the expertise to take a project and see it through from conception to completion can also be called a full-stack developer, someone who is well-versed in all the layers of computer or web software/product development.

CODE
12.

Computer code is written for a variety of purposes, from web pages to computer desktop software to app development. Each purpose is associated with a different programming language. In order to write in a language that the program can understand, developers need to write code.

CONTENT MANAGEMENT SYSTEM (CMS)
13.

A CMS refers to an online system in which end-users can create, change and edit website content through the use of an editor that doesn't require HTML knowledge. These systems are often built by developers and used as a program so that non-developers can edit their content more easily.

If a website did not make use of a CMS for content editing, any changes to text, images, or other content would have to be made through editing the code for a particular web page. WordPress is one of the world's leading CMS for its ease of use and compatibility with other tools such as plugins. It means that once your website has been professionally designed, you can make changes, add blog posts, images and more, even if you have limited coding knowledge.

REPOSITORY (REPO)
14.

The repository, when speaking about a website repository, is a location where all the data is kept, maintained and organised. These files will be hosted on a server which has a physical location, but anyone given administration access can download information and modify it. The files will contain specific databases, files or documents which compile to create a website.